A1 First Aid Critical Incident Management Policy & Procedures

Compliant with NZQA Maintaining PTE Registration Rules 2025, the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 and in accordance with NZQA guidelines for managing critical incidents with learners and related response members of staff, whānau and the wider community. Note A1 First Aid does not have international students – all learners are NZ domestic learners.

https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-education-providers/critical-incidents-and-emergencies/

Version: 1.0 | Review Date: December 2026

1. Purpose

This policy outlines A1 First Aid's approach to managing critical incidents to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and continuity of learning for all learners, staff, and stakeholders. It sets out procedures to respond effectively, meet legal obligations, and ensure compliance with NZQA's Maintaining PTE Registration Rules 2025, including the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all learners, staff, contractors, visitors, and other stakeholders who are on-site, off-site for learning activities, or engaged in online/remote learning activities associated with A1 First Aid.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Critical Incident	Any sudden or unexpected situation that poses a serious risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of people; causes significant disruption to operations; or damages the PTE's reputation or facilities.
Examples	Serious injury or death; natural disaster; fire; hazardous material spill; pandemic outbreak; violent or threatening behaviour; cyberattack/data breach; serious

misconduct; civil disturbance; terrorism threat.

Incident Controller	The person appointed to lead the response during a critical incident.
Emergency Services	Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Ambulance, Civil Defence, or other relevant agencies.

4. Policy Statement

- A1 First Aid is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, equitable and culturally connected responsive learning and working environment for all learners, staff, contractors and stakeholders.
- Critical incidents will be managed promptly, effectively, and with care and respect for the safety, dignity, privacy and wellbeing of all involved.
- Emergencies requiring 111 assistance will be responded to immediately.
- Responses will be guided by New Zealand law, NZQA requirements, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and the Pastoral Care Code.
- All incidents will be recorded, investigated, and reviewed to improve future prevention and response measures.

5. Responsibilities

Governance/Management:

- Ensure adequate resources and training for critical incident management including staff induction, learner and client information and communications pre course commencement.
- Approve and review the Critical Incident Management Policy.
- Ensure NZQA Critical Incident tools associated with this policy and procedures are implemented correctly and in a timely manner.
- Notify NZQA and other regulatory bodies as required.
- Ensure the A1 First Aid Critical Incident policy and records are kept current, reviewed annually and published along with the annual Pastoral Care Code self-review report on the A1 First Aid website.

Incident Controller (e.g., CEO, Operations Manager, or delegate):

- Lead the immediate response and coordinate with emergency services.
- Set up and co-ordinate a critical incident response team in accordance with the incident and its management needs.
- Ensure appropriate communication with staff, learners, families/whānau, and authorities.

- Manage media enquiries in line with A1 First Aid and NZQA communications protocols (as applicable).

Staff:
- Follow A1 First Aid Critical Incident Management policy and procedures and instructions from the Incident Controller.
- Report all incidents immediately to management or the Incident Controller.
- Support learners and colleagues during and after the incident.

Learners:
- Follow instructions during an incident.
- Report hazards or potential incidents promptly to A1 First Aid Instructor, or management (as appropriate to the situation).

6. Procedure

Step 1 – Immediate Response
1. Ensure personal safety first.
2. Call 111 for emergency services if required.
3. Alert the Incident Controller or senior staff member.
4. Evacuate or secure the site if instructed.

Step 2 – Incident Management
5. Incident Controller assumes control and sets up and instructs response team (if needed).
6. Implement relevant emergency plan (fire, lockdown, first aid, etc.).
7. Account for all learners, staff, and visitors.
8. Provide first aid or support as required.
9. Maintain communication with emergency services.

Step 3 – Communication
10. Inform affected learners, staff, and whānau as soon as practicable.
11. Use culturally responsive communication that considers language needs, accessibility, and cultural protocols.
12. Liaise with media through designated spokesperson only to minimize any long term impacts on A1 First Aid and its sector reputation.

Step 4 – Reporting
13. Complete a Critical Incident Report within 24 hours.
14. Notify NZQA if the incident meets the PTE Registration Rules 2025 reporting threshold (e.g., significant disruption to provision, health and safety breaches, or learner welfare concerns).
15. Maintain records securely and confidentially.

Step 5 – Post-Incident Review and Support

16. Provide debriefing and wellbeing support for affected individuals.
17. Review incident response and identify improvements.
18. Update policy, procedures, and training as needed.

7. Related Documents and NZQA Tools

- Emergency and Critical Incident Contact List (A1 First Aid, Emergency Services and applicable workplace contacts)
- Health and Safety Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Pastoral Care Code Compliance Policy and Procedures
- A1 First Aid Critical Incident records (to be completed in consultation with A1 First Aid Incident Controller)
- Death of a Learner (NZQA Checklist)
- Coronial Enquiry (NZQA Checklist)

8. References

- NZQA Maintaining PTE Registration Rules 2025
- Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
- NZQA Critical Incidents and Emergencies guidelines and toolkit.

9. Document Control

This policy will be reviewed annually or after any critical incident, whichever occurs first. Updates must be approved by the CEO and communicated to relevant staff and partners.

10. Policy Version Update Records

Date of Update	Version #	Reason for Update